

Moderator: Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for joining us on our ninth weekly Teamsters COVID-19 update for staff and affiliates. To get us started this afternoon, general president Jim Hoffa. Mr. Hoffa?

Jim Hoffa: Well, thank you very much for everybody joining me on this call. This is our ninth call, and we are getting through this all together. We're all in this together, and I'm very proud of what we've done. We've been communicating through our union with our affiliates, with our members, and carrying on the services that we are obligated to do, and so proud to do.

We've got a good call for you, because we've got some interesting information. We're going to be having Ernie Soehl, our freight director, talking to us. We're going to have director Marcus King, the human rights and diversity director, and we're also going to have Christy Bailey talking about the newly introduced Heroes Act. For most of you, this is a new stimulus bill. Some of the papers are saying it's worth \$3 trillion. That's the new bill that's been introduced by Nancy Pelosi in the House. We're very excited about it, because this is what American needs. We're going to get this country back. And a lot of people are hurting out there right now.

We also know that it's a time that many, many people aren't working. A lot of people talk about, well, we've got to shelter in place. Not the Teamsters. Millions of Teamsters, over a million Teamsters are working every day, out there, going to work every day, whether you're at UPS, whether you're working at Costco, whether you work at DHL, whether you work flying for Atlas Air, and on and on and on. You're working every day, and you're subject to the dangers of catching the virus.

And that's why we're so proud of the job that our leaders have done, our local union leaders have done, and basically our stewards and everybody else, to make sure we have a safe workplace, to make sure we're out there every day getting things done, to make sure we have the different things that we need to keep people safe on the job.

And that's very important right now. Right now, we're out there seeing that we have people working and making sure employers provide masks, gloves, disinfectant, hand sanitizers. We've done everything to make sure there's no massing of people at work. At UPS, we've changed the way they do meetings. We've even moved time clocks _____ place. So these are the kinds of things we have to do to make sure that we have a safe workplace. And I know

we're going to keep doing it to make sure it gets done.

Getting back to the Heroes Act which Christy Bailey is going to explain, it's very, very important, because everybody knows America is hurting right now. We've got people going in food lines. They don't have enough food for their kids. It's amazing that that's happening today. Thirty-two million Americans have lost their jobs, and we've got to make sure that we're there, and that's what this stimulus bill does. It's \$3 trillion.

One of the most important things in the new Heroes Act is it has already multi-employer pension relief. We all know that many of our multi-employer pension plans are in trouble, and this finally has a program and a _____ that's going to explain and bring money to our funds everywhere by setting up different partitions so we can fund the PBGC, get the plans – our liabilities over to that, and basically make it easier for our plans to survive. And that's what this bill does.

This is not Butch Lewis, but it's something that does help Central States and many of our declining and critical funds, so it's going to be very important that we do that. And we're going to have to do a lot of lobbying on this. We know it's going to pass the House, but we're going to have to fight Mitch McConnell to make sure the Heroes Act becomes something that is real.

Unfortunately, the bill also contains a controversial provision called the Grow Act, for the so-called composite _____. This is something that we've always been against, and hopefully it will be stripped out of any legislation that finally gets through. We have a very aggressive lobbying program to basically make sure the Grow Act does not get in the final bill, but we also have to have relief for our pension funds, and we think that's going to happen.

The Heroes Act is something that we all need, _____ some priority, and we're going to be calling on everybody to be calling people like Mitch McConnell to make sure it gets through. It's incredible that the Republicans are saying we really don't need another stimulus act. What planet do they live on? Do they not know that 32 million people have lost their jobs? Do they not know that people are lining up to get food, that they go to bed hungry every night?

That's the kind of problems we have in this country. The rich and the poor, and that's what unions are about, fighting every day for the workers of this great country.

So without further ado, let's get on with this program, and I'm going to now turn it over to our secretary-treasurer, Ken Hall. Ken?

Ken Hall:

Thank you, Jim, and good afternoon, everyone. You know, as scary and uncertain as things are right now, I'm really amazed at how much we're all able to accomplish. You locals, you're representing your members, keeping the local running, and dealing with the day to day grievances and issues. At the IBT, we're also finding ways to continue our work.

I had a _____ meeting yesterday with the shareholders of XPO. As I'm sure many of you know, XPO has been in our sights for a long time. The XPO annual shareholder meeting is tomorrow, and our capital strategies department has been working hard to get support for shareholder initiatives that would limit executive pay and appoint an independent director to the board of directors.

Our initiatives have received support from the major proxy advisory firms. In order to educate shareholders ahead of the meeting, I hosted a webinar to address a number of issues that shareholders should be concerned about. Workers from all over the world, including San Diego, Kansas City, Spain, and France, participated and shared their stories of inadequate safety procedures, a lack of PPE, lack of sanitation within facilities, and other substandard and dangerous working conditions.

The webinar was held on the Zoom platform, and was extremely well-attended by shareholders. We even had real time translation in three languages so that everyone could speak in their native language. It was really sobering to hear directly from XPO workers, and I'm sure it made an impression on the attendees.

I also want to echo what the general president said regarding the pension relief currently included in the Heroes Act. Keeping our members', including our retirees', pensions intact is an absolute necessary part of stimulating the economy. So this is an issue that we can't just sit back and wait to see what happens. All of us need to contact our legislators and remind them that we'll remember what they did on this issue come November. And we won't stop pushing this issue until we get the relief our retirees and members need and deserve.

And with that, I'd like to turn it over to president of Teamsters Canada, Francois Laporte.

Francois Laporte:

Thank you very much, general secretary Hall, general president Hoffa. Brothers and sisters from across North America, good afternoon. It is my pleasure to present my ninth report during the COVID-19 crisis.

As I mentioned last week, the Canadian economy is slowly and gradually reopening, mainly in the manufacturing sector, in the construction sector. There are some new measures, however, that apply to those sectors, but slowly, they are reopening.

Certain sectors remain closed, retail, shopping malls, mainly, the traveling, restaurant, and entertainment industry are still closed. The US/Canada border are still closed, and they do not – they will not reopen soon. There is discussion right now between the Trump administration and the Prime Minister, the Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau's administration, and now it seems that the new date for reopening the border will be June 21st, so almost more than one extra month. So it is definitely something that affects the economy on both sides of the border.

In Canada, we have two regions who are considered as a hot spot for COVID-19. One is the Ontario region, and the second one – well, the first one I should say is the Quebec region, and more particularly in Montreal. I have to mention that I'm very happy that the Women's Conference was held last year, because I'm telling you, we don't see when this city will reopen. Just to give you an example, on the number of dead people per 100,000 citizens, it's not far behind the one in Italy, Spain. And we are way above the one in the United States. So the situation in Montreal is terrible, and it is even more terrible in the hospital sector and long term care center. It's still very difficult, and many, many, many workers are getting infected every day. And we have lots of people who don't show up at work because they are sick. So it is a very difficult situation.

This week, early this week and last week, in the food processing industry, where we represent thousands of members in that sector, we have seen significant numbers of workers who've gotten infected. And so we are working with the authority. We are working with the employers to make sure that first they implement safety measures to make sure that the people don't get sick. And also, some of them have to stop their operations for a couple of days. And I'm talking about the poultry sector, the meat production plants. We're talking about the dairy and bakery. So we are monitoring the situation, and our local union officers and business

agents are working very hard to assure a safe working environment for our members.

The Canadian government has announced recently financial assistance program for our agriculture sector. That will help our farmers. And also, it will help our people who work in the food processing sector for preventing that – for preventing layoffs in that sector. I took part in a teleconference with the Canadian agriculture minister and also Canadian labor minister, and we are working with the government to make sure to avoid layoffs in that sector. So the assistance will help the farmer, but it will also help to maintain jobs.

Just a few words about the Procurement Council. Last week, I mentioned that I have been appointed to serve on a national COVID-19 council for service and procurement. We held our first meeting. Millions of masks have been bought and have been ordered and also have been distributed across the country. The manufacturing sector, Canadian manufacturing sector, is contributing by producing millions of masks and millions of smocks. So we are buying Canadian and also buy North America, United States. Some of the masks are coming from the United States.

Some interesting news, maybe, for your information. A new vaccine will be tested in Canada. Health Canada has approved and authorized the testing of a vaccine. Surprisingly – I don't know if it's surprising, but that vaccine was originally created in China, but it will be tested in Canada on Canadians. So that's going to be interesting.

So that concludes my report, and I will turn it over to the IBT health and safety director, LaMont Byrd.

LaMont Byrd:

Okay. Thank you very much, Francois. Good afternoon, everyone. I'd like to provide you with a brief update on health and safety related issues concerning the response in the COVID-19 crisis. The pandemic continues. Currently, in the US, with approximately five percent of the world's population, we have one-third of the confirmed cases of COVID-19. And the number of new cases continues to increase at a rapid pace. Researchers estimate that there will be more than 100,000 COVID-19 related fatalities in the US by the end of this month.

If we take New York out of the equation, there is no flattening of the curve in the US. Many medical professionals and other

scientists are alarmed at the rate at which some states are reopening, and the manner in which the population is responding – that is, no physical distancing and no masks. They predict that there will be an increase in the number of cases in these areas that are opening, and the virus will be with us for quite some time.

The safety and health department is working to identify and develop strategies and tools that our local unions can use that may reduce the risk to our members as the country reopening. But realistically, we share the concerns expressed by the medical professionals and others.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the Centers for Disease Control developed a reopening and return to work strategies for certain industries. In general, the guidance recommends that employers assign an individual or department to manage the COVID-19 response program, assess and prepare the workplace for reentry, provide signage to remind workers to maintain physical distancing, use good hand hygiene, and reminders to use mask or personal protective equipment, if necessary, implement enhanced cleaning and disinfection policies to ensure that commonly touched objects, restrooms, are properly maintained.

It's recommended that the rates of ventilation inside of buildings be increased to maximize fresh air flow, and that the maintenance of ventilation systems be maintained properly.

There's also a recommendation to reconfigure workstations to facilitate maintaining physical distancing, prepare the workforce, familiarizing employees with revisions to organizational policies, provide training on how to protect yourself from the virus. And also, it's recommended that there be some level of employee screening, establish policies that require, for example, body temperature measurement, questionnaires to identify if an employee has symptoms that are consistent with COVID-19. Also, establish policies on how to deal with workers who become ill on the job, and establish policies to assist workers in maintaining psychological wellbeing, because we're in pretty tough times these days.

On the OSHA enforcement front, we had a pleasant surprise. The agency recently inspected and issued citations to a food processing facility in Oregon for failure to require employees to maintain physical distancing, even after some positive cases appeared at that facility. What makes this an interesting case is that the agency is

enforcing an executive order that was issued by the governor. We will monitor this case to find out the outcome, because it's likely that the citations will be contested by the employer, and it'll be interesting to see how this whole case is adjudicated.

There are a couple of studies, scientific studies, that I'd like to summarize for you. The first study was conducted by researchers from Columbia University who investigated the impact that relaxing the physical distancing and stay at home strategies will have on infection rates, morbidity, and mortality. The researchers concluded that there will be a significant increase in the spread of the virus, illnesses, and death, as there are no vaccines or effective antiviral treatments currently available.

In the second study, which was conducted by researchers from India, they investigated the transmission of the virus before symptoms appeared in infected individuals. In their research, they compared the results of nasal swab tests and the period of time that those swabs could be used to grow virus, and the onset of symptoms from those individuals who tested positive. They concluded that roughly 68 percent of the cases of COVID-19 could have been caused by viruses being shed by asymptomatic individuals. So we're seeing that there is yet much to be learned about this virus.

As I close, the safety and health department is, as I mentioned, currently reviewing return to work guidance, and we're in the process of developing fact sheets, checklists, and other information to assist local unions and members as workers transition back to work. Again, I'd urge you to visit the Teamsters.org COVID-19 webpage for information, and encourage your members to do the same. Thank you. I'd like to now introduce Christy Bailey.

Christy Bailey:

Thank you, LaMont. This week, the House released their opening offer on the fourth stimulus bill that Congress is considering. It is called the Heroes Act. It's HR 6800. The House will vote on this bill Friday. The Senate has not provided a timeline for action. The negotiations between House and Senate will be intense and will take some time, so it's certainly possible this process will go through the end of the month.

The IBT issued a statement last night focused primarily on the pension provisions in the bill. That statement can be found on Teamster.org.

Going through the bill on pensions, the House bill addresses the

multi-employer pension funding crisis. It requires the federal government to set up a partition program at the PBGC funded by the federal government to rescue financially troubled multi-employer pension plans without cuts to benefits. We support this partition proposal, and will try to see that it is retained through the negotiation process with the Senate.

Unfortunately, as the general president mentioned, the House bill also included the Grow Act, which permits the creation of so-called composite plans. We are deeply disappointed at the inclusion of the Grow Act. It is a bad policy, unproductive, and will prove to be divisive moving forward. We'll be lobbying Congress to have this provision removed from the final negotiated bill.

Beyond our pension priorities, the bill addresses several of the priorities that general president Hoffa laid out in his communication _____ after passage of the Cares Act. Here are some highlights.

Health and safety. The bill requires OSHA to issue an enforceable emergency temporary standard within seven days of the bill's signing that covers all workers, including public sector, from COVID-19 infection. It also requires OSHA to forbid employers from retaliating against workers for reporting safety concerns to their employer, any public authority, to the media, or on social media platforms. It also forbids employers from retaliating against workers for using their own higher level personal protective equipment if the employer does not provide it.

On hazard pay, the bill proposes \$13.00 an hour for essential workers hazard premium pay. Essential workers is defined broadly and includes both private and public workers in Teamster industries, including warehouse, sanitation, delivery, health care, first responders, transportation including rail, and much more.

On paid leave, the bill eliminates the 500 employee cap and makes paid leave available to small businesses. It also eliminates the overly broad exemption for health care workers and emergency responders.

Funds for states and localities. Nearly \$1 trillion are provided for states and localities, including \$500 billion in direct funding for states and \$375 billion in direct funds for larger localities. Critically, the bill also expands the use of these funds to cover lost revenue stemming from COVID public health emergencies.

On COBRA extensions, it provides 100 percent federal subsidies to allow workers, including those laid off and with reduced hours, to access COBRA benefits and stay on their employer-based plan premium free through January 31st, 2021.

PPE funds and local unions. It expands the small business funds so that all nonprofits are eligible. That means Teamster locals are eligible now, or all union locals. Extend the program to end of calendar year. It was supposed to end on June 30th. That's been extended to the end of the calendar year.

Direct payments and unemployment insurance. The bill provides an additional stimulus check to households of \$1,200.00 in cash payments to individuals, and \$1,200.00 for dependent children, up to \$6,000.00 per household. It makes children up to the age of 24 eligible for payments. The bill also extends the \$600.00 weekly increase to unemployment insurance into next January.

We will be mobilizing our Teamster actives and retirees around the varied provisions in this bill to put pressure on Mitch McConnell and the Senate Republicans to take up this important legislation as soon as possible. In addition, we continue to monitor efforts at the state level around legislation directly related to COVID, as well as legislation around how we will vote in the upcoming elections, to push for mail ballot elections to protect our Teamster members and all voters.

Finally, while we are talking about the fourth stimulus package, there are provisions of the last stimulus package, CARES, which have not gone into effect, most notably, the loan program that can provide relief to a number of Teamster employers. We are working with allies in Congress to push the Treasury Department to open up those loan programs as soon as possible.

Thank you, and please watch your email for updates as we have the opportunity to more fully vet the legislation that was introduced yesterday. And with that, I'd like to turn the call over to the director of the IBT Human Rights and Diversity Commission, Marcus King.

Marcus King:

Good afternoon, and thank you, Christy. It is my serious hope that everyone is staying safe during this unprecedented time. As we get further into this COVID-19 health crisis that is affecting the globe, the Human Rights and Diversity Commission are attempting to spread our presence into several different media outlets. These

include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, as well as creating a newsletter that will be sent out to the staff at the IBT headquarters, local unions, joint councils, and affiliates, bringing the most up to date events happening across our nation.

We continue to work diligently with all the departments and divisions of the IBT to be sure we are broadcasting the most accurate information. We are aware and are following the latest in how this pandemic is affecting our most vulnerable members and their communities.

As we are presented with data, we recognize that this pandemic is more than just a health care crisis. It is a social and economic **despair** that affects the marginalized workers in the most vulnerable communities. The social justice issue that affects individuals like **Ahmad** Bradley and Breonna Taylor are not just a one-off. The fact that black and brown communities are being disproportionately affected by COVID-19, these are deep-rooted issues coming to light, because activists that are in the community are speaking loudly to ensure the voice of the unheard are put in the ear of the nation.

We want you all to be aware that HRDC is here, and we are fighting for you. We need you to be our community partner allies across the nation and internationally, to bring light to injustice as you see it. We are asking you to join us on our public media and bring attention to those places that we don't always hear about. And so we're asking you to join us in the fight for equality and inclusion for all. We can be reached at www.HRDC@Teamsters.org.

Thank you for your time, and now I will turn it over to our director of freight, Ernie Soehl.

Ernie Soehl:

Thank you, Marcus. Thank you, general president Jim Hoffa, general secretary-treasurer Ken Hall.

Let me start off with some facts, and this ain't fake news. These are facts that we have to grapple with every day. First, the coronavirus has already killed over 80,000 Americans, 80,000 citizens in roughly 90 days. Those are staggering numbers.

The unemployment rate in this country is now over 16 percent. We have not seen unemployment rates this high since FDR's first term of office at the height of the Great Depression in the 1930s. That was a time when people were standing in soup lines, living in tent

cities. Thank God I wasn't there, but I heard a lot from my grandparents and parents about that.

Six months ago in freight we had more jobs than CDL drivers. Now drivers are laid off at every freight company, union and non-union, across the country. Think about those facts. Let them sink in.

These are truly serious times. The hope is obviously that we can bounce back and that these unemployment rates will not linger for a long time. I cannot imagine what our Teamster brothers and sisters who are convention workers, school workers, school bus drivers, flight attendants, or those who work in the other customer-facing industries, like casinos and hotels, are going through. They're completely shut down, pretty much 100 percent unemployment.

Even in industries that are not closed, workers are scared. These include grocery store workers, trash haulers, food plant workers, warehouse workers, and package drivers. And of course, our freight division members, too. These workers are faced with the harsh reality of going to work and possibly being exposed to the virus.

Times like this are when being union, and more importantly, being a Teamster, really matters. Today, the Teamsters Union is helping make the workplaces safer. We are working with, and if needed, confronting our contracted companies, but we must remain vigilant. This is especially true, since many states are now starting to reopen businesses.

I want to thank all of the agents, shop stewards, and members out there who are keeping our families and each other safe. For my Teamster brothers and sisters in industries where the companies may not be as responsible as in the freight division, I thank you, and you have my utmost respect. You are doing great work. Every little thing we can do to protect our members makes a huge difference. Little actions count, providing masks, hand sanitizers, educating workers, and making the companies adhere to the CDC recommendations, is absolutely critical and saves lives.

The freight industry, like many others, is an industry that is very much needed and essential during the pandemic. Goods and products still need to be transported. The members of the freight division are doing that, thank God. They are the lifeline of America. Again, it is risky. Our folks are out in public every day.

They're exposed to risk every day. They too, like the rest of the people out there working, they're our heroes. They're my heroes, our freight members. To them I say thank you.

As far as the companies in the freight division specifically, I am in contact with the highest levels of management on a constant basis. I request and receive all sorts of data and volumes and revenues. We have attorneys, **Mitch Gibson**, my freight attorney, who does a great job, our economists, are out there working constantly.

Let me talk about specific companies regarding ABF. _____ including ABF has had 17 total confirmed reported cases of COVID-19 with one fatality. As I reported a few weeks ago, the fatality was Tommy Hogan, a shop steward at the ABF freight terminal in Brooklyn, and he was also recording secretary for Teamsters Local **707**. I knew Tom for a long time. He was a great guy, and he's going to be missed early.

Volumes at ABF are still down about 20 percent overall for April. We have about 1,100 members on lay **up**, or approximately 13 percent of the regular workforce at ABF. ABF executives and non-bargaining union employees at ABF have had their hours and salaries reduced 15 percent to help the company weather the storm. ABF is still making all its contractual required fringe benefit payments, including health, welfare, and pension payments. ABF has been able to achieve a level of PPE supply to now keep its operations regularly supplied. We requested that the company work with our locals to emphasize meet and turn versus lay down runs. This has reduced the number of road drivers staying in motels by over 5,500 layovers just in the month of April. This is significantly reducing exposure of our road drivers to COVID-19, and that's what the members wanted, and we got it for them. The past few weeks have seen some volumes start to improve, and some members have been recalled from lay up.

Now let me talk a little bit about YRC. This is a more difficult situation. When I talk about YRCW, I am talking about YRC Freight, Holland, New Penn, and Reddaway. The last ten years at YRCW have been really tough. The members had to take huge cuts and make tremendous sacrifices just to keep the company alive. Barely a year ago, we negotiated a new YRCW national master freight agreement that started to restore some of the things that had been given up. Wages were increased significantly. Health care was protected. Job security was improved. There was 100 percent employment for our members. But the company was counting on growth to fuel its recovery.

Now everything has been turned upside down. YRC lost about 25 percent of its volumes overnight as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Perhaps even worse is the fact that many of its customers have been unable to pay YRCW due to closures or _____. This has caused a chain reaction, where YRCW in turn isn't getting the money it is owed. So now YRCW companies are faced with a cash flow issue.

As a result, YRCW approached every health and welfare and pension fund they paid into and asked for a deferral. They were not asking for a gift or a concession, but asked for an extension of time to make its required payments. The company has asked the funds to basically keep providing health care to our members while it gets its cash flow sorted out in the short term. Most of the health and welfare funds have been working with YRCW to keep members covered while deferring payments.

But even then, this is only a short-term solution. These funds cannot essentially provide free health care coverage indefinitely. But the next few weeks could make all the difference in the world. YRCW is actively seeking to shore up its situation, including seeking backing from the federal government, like many other companies are. And hopefully, YRCW's current situation will greatly improve within the next few weeks.

Meanwhile, I have encouraged YRCW to stay in contact with each and every fringe benefit fund out there and find a way to maintain health benefits for the near future as it works through what is hopefully a temporary situation. We simply cannot have our members working without health care coverage.

In terms of rumors about concessions, the answer is no. We are not interested in giving concessions. These members gave plenty in the last ten years. The problem is not labor force.

Finally, I would like to end the YRC portion with at least a small glimmer of hope. First, hopefully, YRCW plans to right the ship will be realized quickly, and this rough patch will be in the rear view mirror.

Second, YRCW volumes have increased for the last couple of weeks, and a couple of hundred people have been recalled from layoff. That is at least heading in the right direction.

That's the end of my report for today. I thank you all for listening.

Thank you for the work that you all do. Please continue to be safe and care for the members. At this time, I would like to turn it over to the general president, Jim Hoffa.

Jim Hoffa:

Well, thank you, Ernie, for that report. In closing, I just want to recall so everybody knows, we've got 32 million people out of work. America is hurting right now. We've got the Heroes Act that's been introduced. We want to get behind that and make sure we lobby hard so that it gets passed. And most of all, we've got to make sure we take care of ourselves. I want all the locals and the joint councils to keep in contact with their members so that we can all know what's going on. Go to our website, which is very, very complete, about what's going on, especially with regard to health and safety.

So until we meet again, please stay safe, stay united, and stay Teamsters strong. Thank you very much.

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